



# Best Management Practices for Construction and Development Projects Eastern Prairie-fringed Orchid

*Platanthera leucophaea*

**Common name** • Eastern Prairie-fringed  
Orchid

**Scientific name** • *Platanthera leucophaea*

**Federal status** • Threatened

**State status** • Endangered

## Purpose and Use

The information in this document is to be used to help avoid and minimize species impacts due to construction practices. It is not intended as a guide to manage habitat for a given species. Please contact the Department of Conservation if habitat management information is needed. Because every project and location differ, following the recommendations in this document does not guarantee impacts will not occur to the species and additional information may be required in certain instances. Following the recommendations in this document does not complete Endangered Species Act consultation that may be necessary for species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act; please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for more information.

## Ecology

The Eastern Prairie-fringed Orchid is a stout, erect plant standing one to four feet tall and occurs in rich, deep-soil upland and bottomland prairies of Missouri. This perennial orchid blooms from mid-June to early July and bears seed in August. The flowers are fragrant at night to attract moths, which are the only known pollinators. Following drought years these orchids may remain dormant in the soil. The Eastern Prairie-fringed Orchid was known to have been distributed throughout the state in mesic areas of upland prairies, in bottomland prairies, and in prairie fens. Currently it is known only in Grundy County.

## Reasons for Decline

Decline of the Eastern Prairie-fringed Orchid is directly linked to the conversion of prairies to cropland and exotic grass pastures. Currently, the Eastern Prairie-fringed Orchid's habitat continues to be lost to agricultural practices that diminish or destroy high-quality prairie remnants.

## Specific Recommendations

- Survey prairie swales, fens, and wet prairies in Missouri during flowering period to determine if the orchid is present.

- At known or expected occurrence sites: avoid herbicide use during growing season unless spot spraying is used on target species.
- Do not mow during the orchid's growing season.
- Maintain or promote hydrologic conditions fostering prairie swales and bottomland prairies.
- Avoid any pesticide use at prairie sites that might affect the species' pollinators.
- Maintain high-quality, diverse prairie through periodic burning or haying during the annual dormant season of the orchid.

## General Recommendations

If your project involves the use of Federal Highway Administration transportation funds, these recommendations may not fulfill all contract requirements. Please contact the Missouri Department of Transportation at 573-526-4778 or the [Missouri Department of Transportation Environmental Studies webpage](#) for additional information on recommendations.

## Information Contacts

For further information regarding regulations for development in rivers and streams, contact:

For species information:

[Missouri Department of Conservation](#)  
Science Branch  
P.O. Box 180  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180  
Telephone: 573-751-4115

For species information and Endangered Species Act Coordination:

[U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#)  
Ecological Services  
101 Park Deville Drive, Suite A  
Columbia, MO 65203-0007  
Telephone: 573-234-2132

For Clean Water Act Coordination:

[Missouri Department of Natural Resources](#)  
Water Protection Program  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176  
Telephone: 573-751-1300, 800-361-4827

[U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#)  
Regulatory Branch  
700 Federal Building

Kansas City, MO 64106-2896  
Telephone: 816-389-3990

[U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#)

EPA Region 7 Water Division  
11201 Renner Boulevard  
Lenexa, KS 66219  
Telephone: 913-551-7977

**Disclaimer**

These Best Management Practices were prepared by the Missouri Department of Conservation with assistance from state and federal agencies, contractors, and others to provide guidance to those who wish to voluntarily act to protect wildlife and habitat. Compliance with these Best Management Practices is not required by the Missouri wildlife and forestry law nor by any regulation of the Missouri Conservation Commission. Federal laws such as the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act, and state or Local laws need to be considered for construction and development projects and require permits and/or consultation with the appropriate agency. Following the recommendations provided in this document will help reduce and avoid project impacts to the species, but impacts may still occur. Please contact the appropriate agency for further coordination and to complete compliance requirements.